
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ISSUE OF
A CANCER PRESUMPTIVE STATUTE RELATING TO FIREFIGHTERS.

1 WHEREAS, highly concentrated toxicants in the form of
2 plastics and other synthetics often burn in residential or
3 vehicle fires; and
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5 WHEREAS, although fire departments have improved procedures
6 for cleaning firefighters' protective clothing and breathing
7 apparatus, firefighters may still become exposed to carcinogens
8 and toxicants while performing their duties; and
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10 WHEREAS, the exposure to toxicants during a firefighter's
11 career may not result in symptoms or a cancer diagnosis until
12 years after retirement; and
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14 WHEREAS, University of Cincinnati environmental health
15 researchers have determined that firefighters are significantly
16 more likely to develop various types of cancer than workers in
17 other fields; and
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19 WHEREAS, a study released by the University of Cincinnati
20 in 2006 found that, when compared to the general population, the
21 risk for firefighters is:
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- 23 (1) One hundred and two per cent higher for testicular
24 cancer;
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- 26 (2) Fifty-three per cent higher for multiple myeloma;
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- 28 (3) Fifty-one per cent higher for non-Hodgkin lymphoma;
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- 30 (4) Thirty-nine per cent higher for skin cancer;
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- 32 (5) Thirty-two per cent higher for brain cancer and
33 malignant melanoma;



(6) Twenty-nine per cent higher for rectal cancer;

(7) Twenty-eight per cent higher for prostate cancer;

(8) Twenty-four per cent higher for buccal cavity and pharynx cancer;

(9) Twenty-two per cent higher for stomach cancer;

(10) Twenty-one per cent higher for colon cancer; and

(11) Fourteen per cent higher for leukemia; and

WHEREAS, firefighters also face a greater risk of contracting infectious diseases and illnesses associated with exposure to patient care and biochemical substances due to bioterrorism; and

WHEREAS, a firefighter's cancer diagnosis can also have an enormous impact on a spouse, children, and other family members, including a heavy emotional toll, financial costs, and a decreased quality of life; and

WHEREAS, some states have enacted cancer presumptive statutes, which create a presumption that certain types of cancer diagnosed among firefighters result from their employment as firefighters; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the House of Representatives concurring, that various stakeholders are requested to convene a Firefighter Cancer Presumptive Task Force (Task Force) to develop recommendations for the enactment of a cancer presumptive statute relating to firefighters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall be comprised of:

(1) The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health, or the Chairperson's designee;



- (2) The Chairperson of the House Committee on Health, or the Chairperson's designee;
- (3) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;
- (4) The Administrator of the Disability Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, or the Administrator's representative;
- (5) The Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, or the Director's designee;
- (6) The Director of the department that oversees human resources for each county, or the Director's designee;
- (7) A representative from the health insurance industry;
- (8) A private attorney familiar with workers compensation claims; and
- (9) The President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, or the President's designee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall select a chairperson from among its members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to provide a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include:

- (1) An analysis of the number of cancer patients among the state's general population as compared to the number who are firefighters; and
- (2) Recommendations, if any, for revisions to workers compensation statutes to expedite the award of workers compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;



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- (3) An estimate of the cost to the State and counties of workers compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;
- (4) Current county fire department safety procedures and protocols related to preventing and reporting firefighter exposure to toxicants; and
- (5) Recommendations, if any, for changes to a fire department's administrative rules to improve workers compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health, Chairperson of the House Committee on Health, Director of Health, Administrator of the Disability Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, Director of the department that oversees human resources for each county, Fire Chief of each county, and President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association.

OFFERED BY:



By Request

